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MRS. LUCY LONG BRECKINRIDGE.

BY W. T. NORTON.

The death of Mrs. Lucy Long Breckinridge, widow of Dr. M. P. Breckinridge, seems to call for more than the passing notice which it received in the press at the time as she represented in her person the culture and valor of a past generation and which she passed on to the present. As a link between the present and the past her beautiful life was a notable one reaching from peaceful days in the south, in her early married life, through the storms of the Civil War, in which her husband was engaged, then to long, quiet years at the homestead in Alton, devoted to the care of her family, to the interests of the church and the neighborly life of a gracious Christian lady. And her years came to a close in the midst of the clamor of a war in which three of her grandsons are sustaining the record of their sires. And of this heritage of the past I wish to speak briefly that those of the present generation may realize, more fully, perhaps, how great is their debt to the forbears and early contemporaries of one who passed over a half century of her life in this community. She was the daughter of Col. Stephen H. Long, a noted scientist, civil engineer and explorer. He was the son of Moses Long, a soldier of the Revolution, and a brother of Capt. Enoch Long, an officer of the war of 1812, of Major G. W. Long, a graduate of West Point and an officer of engineers; of Dr. B. F. and Preble Long, all five brothers pioneer residents of Alton and Godfrey. All were men of distinction in their several professions. Enoch Long was the commander of the defenders of the Lovejoy press in the pro-slavery riot of 1837.

Col. Stephen T. Long was born at Hopkinton, N. H. in 1784, graduated at Dartmouth College, entered the army in 1814 as second lieutenant, and from that time on, including

a period as instructor in mathematics at West Point, gradually advanced in rank until his retirement, in 1863 as Chief of Topographical engineers, U. S. A. with the rank of Colonel. He probably filled more important positions and discharged more onerous duties than any other officer of engineers in the army. Following the expeditions of Lewis and Clark and Gen. Zebulon M. Pike he did more than any other explorer, by his surveys and discoveries, to unlock the secrets of the vast wilderness, lying between the Mississippi and the Rocky Mountains, a century ago. After a remarkable constructive career, at various stations, from the Atlantic to the far west, he closed his life in Alton, in a serene old age, in 1864. He was a man of sincere piety and a member of the vestry of St. Paul's Church. He rests under a massive granite tomb in Alton city cemetery, bearing simply his name and rank, but his enduring monument is "Long's Peak," named in his honor, over a hundred years ago, as the great pathfinder of the west.

Mrs. Breckinridge was born in Philadelphia, where her father was then engaged in government work. Later on he was stationed, for several years, at Louisville, Ky., where the daughter passed from childhood to womanhood. She was educated under the supervision of her father, himself a ripe scholar. She was proficient as a linguist conversing as readily in Spanish and French as in English. She studied under special tutors and became adept in all the accomplishments of the day befitting a young lady of high station. She was a talented musician, both by endowment and cultivation. Her skill as a pianist was the delight of her friends both in early and later years. Our musicians recall her renditions as marvels of taste and expression. She was remarkable for her beauty, grace and many accomplishments, but more than all, for the indefinable charm of the beautiful soul which shone through her face. These gifts and attainments made her in youth a social favorite and, remaining with her in after years, bound her in ties of affection to a host of friends.

At the age of nineteen she was married to Dr. Marcus Prevost Breckinridge, a scion of the noted Kentucky family

of that name, which to mention is to recall important events in our national annals. The doctor was a son of Rev. W. L. Breckinridge and a nephew of Rev. Robert J. Breckinridge, the latter especially famous for his intrepid and conspicuous loyalty, to the Union cause during the Civil War. Dr. Breckinridge was also a first cousin of John C. Breckinridge, Vice-President of the United States from 1857 to 1861 and candidate for President of the southern Democracy in 1860. The young couple, soon after their marriage, removed to Louisiana where the doctor engaged in the practice of his profession. He was a staunch Union man and when the war broke out he returned to the north with his wife. He entered the Union army as captain of commissary and was stationed at various posts. His wife sometimes remained with him but before the close of the war came to the Alton home of her father, who had previously removed here, and where her husband followed at the close of the conflict. The marriage of Dr. Breckinridge and his bride was an alliance of two families of marked distinction in the north and the south, but it was a union of mutual loyalty to a common cause and also of mutual devotion to each other. But it was a union all too short, for in 1870, Dr. Breckinridge passed away in the prime of manhood, leaving five children to the care of his wife. That these children were true to their heritage and became honored members of the community is a tribute to her domestic devotion and lofty ideals through her long years of widowhood, that cannot be too highly praised. Loved and revered by her family, and held in affectionate esteem by her associates and by the church in which she was honored she passed to her rest, after a brief illness to join in the divine strains of the "choir invisible." The faith of her father was hers and with it the reward promised the pure in heart. Her life recalls much of the country's history in which her own and her husband's forbears bore so honorable a part, and which her life as wife and daughter linked together. It is well to glance backward, sometimes "lest we forget" the debt we owe to those gone before.

Three children of Mrs. Breckinridge survive her: They are Mrs. Lucy B. Taylor, wife of the late T. A. Taylor, a prominent resident of Alton and a Union soldier; W. L. and Richard Breckinridge of Chicago. The former is chief engineer of the great Burlington system. She left six grand children, Ashley, of Kansas City; Marcus P. Lucian and Theodosia Taylor of Alton; W. L. and Frank Breckinridge, of Chicago; also two great grand children. Three of her grandsons are now in the army: Marcus P. with the U. S. Engineers at Honolulu; Lucian at Camp Bowie, Texas; and W. L. Breckinridge, IV, at training camp. Each holds the rank of Lieutenant. It is interesting to note the transmission of the engineering talent in this family through four generations. The son of Col. S. H. Long, Capt. Henry C. Long, W. L. Breckinridge III and three great grandsons, all became engineers.

The funeral of Mrs. Breckinridge took place from the family home on Friday, October 19, 1917, conducted by Rev. Frederick D. Butler, Rector of St. Paul's in the presence of a large company of neighbors and friends. The services consisted of the impressive ritual of the Episcopal Church and the singing of two favorite hymns of the departed. The interment was private, in the family lot in the City cemetery. She lies at rest beside the husband of her youth awaiting their call to the resurrection of the just.